

## REVIEWS

**PULMONARY EMPHYSEMA.** Edited by Alvan L. Barach and Hylan A. Bickerman, with sixteen contributors. (Pp. x + 550; figs. 185. 80s.) London: Baillière, Tindall & Cox, 1957.

THE editors have brought together sixteen other American authorities to discuss various aspects of applied respiratory physiology in the field of emphysema. The book is of great value in presenting in one volume the many aspects of this work, and could be read with profit by all physicians who have a keen interest in the treatment of what is one of the most important diseases in this country. It is, of course, a must for the worker in experimental respiratory physiology, but for the ordinary doctor or student the many pearls that are to be found in over five hundred pages are somewhat obscured by both its length and lack of unity. As is admitted by the editors, different points of view are to be found amongst the contributors, and to the tyro this may be somewhat confusing. It is a series of important monographs, in which there is a certain amount of overlapping, so that it requires reading two or three times to get a sense of continuity.

The dangers of  $\text{CO}_2$  retention are well emphasized, although there is not full agreement between the contributors as to immediate gravity of this in the presence of a normal hydrogen ion concentration maintained by adaptive mechanisms. The rôle of increased work of breathing in the accumulation of  $\text{CO}_2$  is well stressed, as are the evils of decreased lung tension and subsequent check valve closure of the bronchii in expiration. It is perhaps in the field of alleviation of symptoms that this book has its greatest value. The help that may be given without upsetting homeostasis by gradual increments in continuous oxygen therapy and commencing with 1.2 litres per minute has been pointed out by Barach. The importance of restoring diaphragmatic function and the use of the  $20^\circ$  head-down position, both in this respect and in bronchial drainage, are probably not generally recognised, and this is well presented. The proper uses of bronchodilators and prednisone are brought out. Considerable discussion is given to the effects of mechanical methods—cough machines and the use of continuous and intermittent positive pressure apparatus, leaving one in rather mental whirl as to their practical importance. Diagrams and descriptions of apparatus used are somewhat sketchy if one wishes to know the mechanical details. Papers on the rôle of surgery, the influence of infection and the use of drugs are presented. It is of interest to see that potassium iodide and ipecacuanha still hold a place, although there are dangers in the former if hyperkalæmia should result from respiratory acidosis.

Opinions on the use of diamox to reduce bicarbonate and  $\text{CO}_2$  are conflicting; the editors consider the resulting metabolic acidosis to be a contraindication. Final chapters on cor pulmonale and respiratory function tests are included, although the latter is somewhat incomplete. Nevertheless, a case has been made out for the proper control of treatment of these patients with even limited pulmonary function tests, and this volume will be of great value to those applying these methods previously academic to ordinary hospital medicine.

A. P. G.

**THE EYE IN GENERAL PRACTICE.** By C. R. S. Jackson, M.A., B.M., B.Ch.(Oxon.), D.O.M.S., F.R.C.S.(Ed.). (Pp. viii + 152; figs. 25. 21s.) Edinburgh and London: E. & S. Livingstone, 1957.

THIS book of 148 pages is well set out, the print is good and the illustrations quite adequate. The subject matter covers what a G.P. and medical student should know. It does not attempt to describe operations, complicated methods of examination or any treatment of a highly specialised nature.

The teaching, on the whole, is sound, but it is a pity that the modern classification of glaucoma has not been adopted.

In the local treatment of conjunctivitis the author prefers the sulphonamide to the anti-biotic drops, which is in keeping with the Scottish teaching, but is not generally accepted.

I can recommend this book to medical students, and think they will find it suitable in size and price.

J. R. W.